

Carlisle Housing Authority
Meeting Minutes
March 9, 2015

Present: Alan Lehotsky, Chair; Carolyn Ing; Mark Levitan; Steven Pearlman; Elizabeth DeMille Barnett, Housing Coordinator. **Absent:** W. Randall Brown

Guests: Barbara Bjornson, resident; Betsy Fell, Carlisle Mosquito

1. **Meeting called to order** at 7:34 p.m.
2. **Community Input** (none)
3. **Old Business**

A. NOAH Benfield Farms

NOAH Annual rent certification. Mr. Lehotsky reported that the annual process of certifying affordable housing income and assets for resident eligibility is in process.

B. Community Preservation Act Funding for Fiscal Year (FY) 2016 Community Housing Fund Application

Mr. Lehotsky reported that the Community Preservation Committee (CPC) approved the Affordable Housing Trust's FY2016 request for \$50,000 of Community Preservation Act (CPA) funds at its March 4th meeting. The Trust's funding request is for a three-year Community Housing Fund grant to be used to assist the Town in its affordable housing production goals. CPC rules stipulate the funds be returned if not used during this three-year period. This funding request will be a Town Meeting article, which the CPC will present, at 2015 Annual Town Meeting, along with other CPC FY16 CPA funding requests.

C. Update 2010 Town Of Carlisle Housing Production Plan

Mr. Lehotsky reported that the initial meeting of the Housing Production Plan Committee will be held on Monday March 16 at 7 PM. He reminded the board that a second volunteer from the Housing Authority is still needed.

D. 338 Bedford Road Ground Lease Group Home Duplex for Residents with Intellectual-Disabilities Request for Proposals

Mr. Lehotsky initiated the discussion by stating that he believed the Housing Authority was had gathered enough information to begin to evaluate the single proposer response to the 338 Bedford Road Ground Lease Group Home Duplex for Residents with Intellectual-Disabilities Request for Proposals (RFP). There was consensus within the board to proceed.

Mr. Lehotsky started by stating that one proposal had been received by the Housing Authority that complied with all requirements of the RFP (Respondent #1.). Mr. Lehotsky asked Steven Pearlman, Carolyn Ing and Elizabeth D. Barnett, Housing Coordinator to report on their respective reference checks in the days prior to the meeting. He noted that the three had used the same reference question sheet. Mr. Pearlman generalized the reference checks by saying that "references were glowing." Two of the references were creditors who use Respondent #1's services. He noted that "relationships were characterized as long, term, professional and timely."

Ms. Ing briefed the board on her reference checks with the report that the references from the from financial institutions she contacted which had been provided by Respondent #1, were all favorable. She noted that Respondent #1 had been characterized by the financial institutions “as astute about its financial condition.”

Ms. Barnett summarized the responses to the reference questions she received from Senior staff from the Regional Office of the Massachusetts Department of Services, as it appears that there has been a mutually beneficial thirty-year relationship between DDS and Respondent #1. Respondent #1's business practices had been described by the agency as extraordinarily sound and its residential service program component as “state-of-the art.” Ms. Barnett also reported that the current Executive Director of the Chelmsford Housing Authority reference for Respondent #1's team architect. The Executive Director noted that the architect had a successful twenty-year relationship with the Chelmsford Housing Authority via five separate development projects with Respondent #1's architectural firm. The architecture firm also had been characterized as being responsive to community needs and “demanding clients.”

Ms. Ing also reported that on the earlier site visit to Respondent #1's Westborough group home, she noted the quality of construction, furniture, fixtures, and materials.

Ms. Barnett stated that the additional information requested of the applicant had been received by her office. This included: 1) a Letter of Credit from Respondent #1's lender, stating there is a high likelihood that they will grant funding to the project; 2) Acknowledgement by Respondent #1 that they would apply for funding from the state Facilities Consolidation Fund; 3) Ground Lease Group Home Pro-forma construction and operating budgets. These documents were circulated to the board.

Final Evaluation

Each Housing Authority member present completed a proposal evaluation form that aligned with the six categories of evaluation on the RFP:

1. Construction Experience and Capacity
2. Financial Experience
3. Feasibility of Development Plan
4. Quality of The Proposed Design and Product
5. Cost Control Ability and Current Capacity
6. Ability to Work with Government

As outlined in the RFP, each category would be ranked "Highly Advantageous," "Advantageous" or "Less Advantageous." All Housing Authority board members present, following discussion of the six categories, came to the consensus that Respondent #1's proposal was "Highly Advantageous" in each of the six individual categories.

Mr. Pearlman moved that the Housing Authority accept the proposal from Respondent # 1 and to draft a letter inviting the respondent to enter into negotiations for a ground lease for a group home duplex. The motion was seconded by Ms. Ing. All present aye; the motion was approved.

Mr. Lehotsky then proposed to hire Kathleen O'Donnell, Esquire, as special counsel for the 338 Bedford Road Ground Lease Group Home Duplex project. He noted that Ms. O'Donnell had provided high-quality work on the NOAH Benfield Farms Ground Lease and related documents. Following discussion and proposal consensus, Mr. Lehotsky asked for a motion that the Housing Authority to engage the services of Kathleen O'Donnell as special counsel for negotiating the ground lease and for work developing the lease and any other required documents and/or procedures. Ms. Ing made the motion. The motion was seconded by Mr. Levitan. All present aye; the motion was approved.

At this time Mr. Lehotsky stated that Respondent #1 is TILL, Inc. (Toward Independent Living and Learning, Inc.) of Dedham, MA.

4. New Business

- A. Ms. Barnett announced that the 2015 Mass. Housing Partnership's annual Housing Institute will occur at Devens, Massachusetts on June 10 and 11. Members were encouraged to attend and told there is budget for conference fees.

5. Authorizations

- A. Ms. Ing moved that the Housing Authority authorize Mr. Lehotsky to sign a Benfield Farms Estoppel letter, required as part of NOAH's permanent loan, stating that NOAH/Benfield Farms is in good standing relative to its lease, pending document review and approval by Special Counsel Kathleen O'Donnell. The motion was seconded by Mr. Levitan. All present aye; the motion was approved.

6. Approval of Minutes

- A. The draft February 23, 2015 Meeting Minutes were reviewed. Ms. Ing made a motion to accept the minutes as written. The motion was seconded by Mr. Pearlman. All present aye; the motion was approved.

7. Next Meeting Dates: Tuesday, March 24, 2015 at 7:30 PM.

8. Meeting Adjourned at 8:10 p.m. Motion by Mr. Pearlman; seconded by Mr. Levitan. All present aye; the motion was approved.

Respectfully submitted,
Mark Levitan, Secretary